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NASA Procedural Requirements

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Appendix F: Compound Words

1. Use the Gregg Reference Manual, latest Webster's dictionary, and GPO Style Manual as references for compounding words. As you will notice, certain words are illustrated differently in various sources. In these cases, defer to the more commonly used version.
2. Word forms are constantly changing. Two-word forms often require the hyphen initially, then later become one word. Current language trends point to closing up words which, through frequent use, have become associated in the reader's mind as units of thought.
3. Generally, whenever a word form (or applicable rule) cannot be found in the Gregg Reference Manual, GPO Style Manual, or dictionary, it should be two words.
4. The following represents commonly used compound words. The abbreviations indicate function: noun (n.), adjective (adj.), verb (v.), adverb (adv.). Keep in mind that many words can function as different parts of speech, depending on the context. Most hyphenated words require hyphens if they precede the word they're describing, but they are usually written without hyphens if they follow the described word. This listing is a representation of commonly used words at NASA. It is not intended to be an inclusive listing.

across-the-board (adj., adv.) This is an across-the-board reduction. Reductions will occur across the board.)

ad hoc (foreign phrase) (adj.) (...an ad hoc committee).

aero (a prefix that will combine with other words such as aerodynamic)

aerospace (n., adj.) (aerospace medicine), but National Aero-Space Plane (this term exception to rule)

Agency-wide (NASA preference-adj., adv.) This is Agency-wide policy. A search will be conducted Agency wide.

African-American (adj.) (...African-American customs)

African American (n.) (Louise is an African American.)

airfare (n.)

airmail (n., v.)

all hands (n.)

Anglo-American (n., adj.)

assemblyperson (n.)

backup (n., adj.)

back up (v.) (Please back up your data on a diskette.)

baseline (n., v.)

benchmark (n., v.)

biweekly (adj., adv.)

bona fide (adj.)

breakthrough (n., adj.)

broadminded (adj.)

buildup (n.) (There was a gradual buildup of that military base.)

build up (v.) (They are trying to build up their reputations.)

businessperson (n.)

buyout (n.) (Are you applying for the buyout?)

buy out (v.) (We want to buy out your company.)

callup (n.) The callup for nominations was received yesterday.

call up (v.) I can call up any subject on the computer.

cannot (combination of verb (can) and adverb (not))

carryout (n.) (We will eat carryout tonight.)

carryout (adj.) (Are you ordering carryout food tonight?)

carry out (v.) (The office will carry out the plan to transfer...)

carryover (n.) (The carryover from 2005...)

carry over (v.) (The funds will carry over into 2006.)

checklist (n.)

checkout (n.) Please proceed to checkout.

checkout (adj.) (There are several checkout buildings at KSC.)

check out (v.) (The primary objective was to check out the Shuttle system.)

class action (n.) (The employees are considering a class action.)

class-action (adj.) (The employees filed a class-action suit.)

clear-cut (adj.) (It was a clear-cut decision.)

closedown (n.) (The closedown will last two hours)

closeout (n.) It is time to prepare this year's closeout.

close out (v.) We will close out overdue actions by Monday.

close-up (adj.) (That is a nice close-up picture of you.)

co (prefix), e.g., coauthor, cochairman, copilot, but co-investigator, co-op

cost-effective (adj.) (...in the most cost-effective method...)

countdown (n.)

crewmember (n.)

crewmen (use crewmember) (NASA preference...gender-neutral)

cross section (n.) (...a cross section of employees...)

cutoff (adj.) (The cutoff date was April 1.)

database (n.)

decision making (n.) (I will rely on you for the decision making.)

decision-making (adj.) (You are the decision-making authority.)

double space (n.) (Leave a double space between paragraphs.)

double-space (v.) (Please double-space the draft.)

downsize (v.)

downtime (n.) (Shuttle "downtime")

drawback (n.)

e-mail (n.,v.)

early out (n.) (Did you take an early out during the buyout season?)

early-out (NASA preference-adj.) (NASA has achieved early-out authority.)

earthborn (adj.)

ex officio (n.) (foreign phrase)

fine-tune (v.) (...to fine-tune the format...)

first-class (adj.) (...a first-class individual...; ...a first-class seat...)

first-class (adv.) (...to travel first-class...; (...mailed first-class...))

firsthand (adj.) (He has firsthand knowledge of the situation.)

flowchart (n.,v.)

flyby (n.) (The asteroid flyby will occur next year.)

fly by (v.) (The Galileo spacecraft will fly by the planet.)

follow-on (n.,adj.)

followup (adj.) (A followup meeting will occur.)

followup (n.) (We will do a followup next week.)

follow up (v.) (We will follow up the meeting with a discussion.)

free flight (n.)

free-flight (adj.)

freeflyer (n.) (...to service freeflyers...)

free-flying (adj.) (see free-floating in dictionary.) (...a free-flying spacecraft...; ...robotic spacecraft are free-flying...)

full-cost (NASA preference) (adj.) (NASA has implemented full-cost accounting procedures at Headquarters.)

full-time (adj.) (...full-time position...)

full time (adv.) (She works full time.)

FY 2006 (n.) (NASA preference)

GS-15 (n.) (NASA preference)

Government-wide (NASA preference) (adj., adv.) (U.S.); government-wide (state, city)

Government-owned (adj.) (U.S.); government-owned (state, city)

ground-based (adj.) (The ground-based data...)

ground based (adj.) (The information was ground based.)

ground rule (n.)

groundwork (n.)

hand-carry (v.) (...hand-carry the document)

handout (n.) (Please send me a copy of the handout.)

hand out (v.) (We will hand out the schedules tomorrow morning.)

hard-working (adj.)

heavy-lift (adj.) (...heavy-lift launch vehicle...; ...heavy-lift requirements...)

high-quality (adj.) (That picture is a high-quality image taken from the Hubble Space Telescope.)

high-speed (adj.)

home page (n.) or Home Page (NASA preference)

humankind (n.) (NASA preference) ("Humankind" is a gender-neutral word used throughout the Agency.)

hundredfold (n., adj.)

in-depth (adj.)

in-flight (adj.) (...in-flight experiment...)

infrastructure (n.)

in-house (adj.) (We will participate in an in-house study.)

in-orbit (adj.) (...in-orbit repair mission...)

in orbit (adv.) (The repair in orbit was successful. The satellite was placed in orbit.)

inter (...between, among...as prefix, generally one word) (interagency, intercenter, interoffice)

intra (...within, inside...as prefix, generally one word) (intraoffice, but intra-Agency)

kickoff (n.) The kickoff for launch activities will occur Monday, June 23.

kick off (v.) We will kick off the activities at noon.

lakebed (n.) (The lakebed at Edwards AFB is dry.)

land-based (adj.)

lead time (n.) (The lead time for responding...)

lifetime (n.,adj.)

lift-off (n.,adj.)

lightweight (n.,adj.)

light-year (n.)

long-range (adj.) (...long-range plan...)

long-term (adj.) (...long-term commitment...)

long term (n.) (The committee member served a long term.)

longstanding (adj.) (longstanding relationship)

macroeconomics (n.)

mainframe (n.,adj.)

marketplace (n.)

markup (n.) (...OMB markup...)

mark up (v.) (OMB will mark up the budget request.)

member at large (n.)

mid (prefix, usually combines to form one word) (midafternoon...midday...midpoint)

mid-1990s (n.)

mid-August (n.)

mockup (n.,adj.)

multi (prefix, usually one word) (multicultural...multiyear)

NASA-wide (NASA preference)

Nationwide (adj.,adv.)

near-term (adj.) (...near-term plans...)

near term (n.) (We will evaluate it in the near term.)

non (...not... prefix, generally one word) (nonadvocate...nongovernment) but non-Government or non-Federal)

no one (n.)

northeast, northwest (adv.,adj.,n.)

Officials-in-Charge (NASA preference) (The memo will be sent to Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices.)

offline (adj.,adv) (adj...offline discussions) (adv. Discussions will be held offline.)

offsite (NASA preference)

onboard (adj.) (...onboard experiment)

on board (adv.) (The experiment will take place on board.)

ongoing (adj.)

online (n.,adj) (NASA is now online for Internet connections.)

on-orbit (adj.) (...on-orbit repair...)

onorbit (n.; NASA preference)

onsite (n.) (NASA preference)

order of magnitude (n.) (...the Earth's mass is on the order of magnitude...)

O-ring (n.)

over (can combine to form another word) (overstress)

paperwork (n.)

part-time (adj.) (A part-time position...)

part time (adv.) (She works part time for the agency.)

per diem (n.)

phaseout (n.,adj.) (The phaseout of the activities...Phaseout activities will begin...)

phase out (v.) (We will phase out the aircraft beginning next year.)

point of contact (n.) (Vanessa is the point of contact for the project.)

post (prefix, generally one word) (postdoctoral...postflight...postlaunch... postwar) (but post-Cold War)

pre (prefix, generally one word) (preflight...prelaunch...premeeting...preorbital)

President-elect (n.)

problem solving (n.)

program-wide (adj.,adv) (NASA preference)

real-time (adj.) (...real-time data...)

real time (n.) (The decision will be made in real time.)

reengineer (v., adj.) (NASA preference) (NASA has completed its reengineering activities.)

reentry (n.)

re-register (v.)

return to flight (v.) (NASA preference) (When we return to flight, ...)

return-to-flight (adj.) (NASA preference) (...return-to-flight activities)

rollout (n., adj.)

roll out (v.) (NASA preference)

roundtable (adj.)) (roundtable discussions)

round trip (n.) (He will take a round trip to Paris.)

round-trip (adj.) (He purchased a round-trip ticket.)

rulemaking (n.,adj.)

runway (n.)

Secretary-designate (n.)

self-confidence (n.)

shortfall (n.)

short-term (adj.) (A short-term loan...)

short term (n.) (She will begin in the short term.)

shutdown (n.) (The nuclear power plant averted a shutdown.)

shut down (v.) (We will shut down the plant next week.)

side-mount (adj.) (...side-mount concept...)

single-space (v.) (I will single-space the document.)

single-spaced (adj.) (This is a single-spaced document.)

space-based (adj.) (...the space-based experiment...)

spaceborne (adj.,adv.)

spacecraft (n.)

spacefaring (adj.) (refer to seafaring)

space-related (adj.) (This is a list of space-related words.)

space related (adj.) (The material is space related.)

space flight (n.) (NASA preference is two words.)

spacesuit (n.)

spacewalk (n.)

stand-alone (adj.) (...stand-alone computer...)

standdown (n.) (We will conduct a safety standdown next Monday.)

stand down (v.) (We will stand down the flight simulator Wednesday.)

startup (n.,adj.) (The startup of the activity...; the startup date...)

start up (v.) (The activity will start up next week.)

state of the art (adj.) (The technology is state of the art.)

state-of-the-art (adj.) (...state-of-the-art technology...)

stationkeeping (n.) (see housekeeping)

STS-114 (n.) (NASA preference)

sub (...under, below...) (prefix..subagency... suborbital...substandard...)

takeoff (n.)

teamwork (n.)

time-consuming (adj.) (...a time-consuming task...)

time consuming (adj.) (Logging the mail is very time consuming.)

timeframe (n.)

timeline (n.)

timetable (n.)

tradeoff (n.)

troubleshooting (v.)

turnaround (n.,adj.)

under (prefix, generally one word) (undergone...underway)

under way (adv.) (We will get under way next month.)

upfront (adj.) (upfront payment)...adv. (to pay upfront)

up-to-date (adj.) (...an up-to-date report...)

up to date (adj.) (Please provide information that is up to date.)

videotape (n., v.)

videotape recorder/recording (n.)

voice mail, voice-mail message (NASA preference) but voice mailbox (n.)

walk-through (n.)

Web page, Web site (n.) (NASA preference)

well-being (n.)

well-received (adj.) (It was a well-received speech.)

well received (adj.) (The speech was well received.)

whistle-blower (n.) (The employee had a reputation as being a whistle-blower.)

wide-angle (adj.) (...wide-angle lens...)

wind-shear (adj.) (The wind-shear conditions concerned the pilot.)

wind shear (n.) (The presence of wind shear concerned the pilot.)

workaround (n.)

workforce (n.) (workhour...workload... workplan...workstation...workyear)

workplace (n.)

world-class (adj.)

worldwide (adj.,adv.)

World Wide Web (always capitalized, NASA preference)

x-ray (adj.) (...an x-ray tube...)

x-ray (v.) (The technician will x-ray the components.)

x ray (n.) (The x ray penetrates solid substances.)

zero-base, zero-based (adj.) (...zero-base budget...; The budget is zero-based.)

zero gravity (n.) (NASA preference in formal correspondence)

zero-g (n.) (NASA preference...for informal correspondence only)

zero-sum (adj.) (...the zero-sum amount...)

zero sum (n.) (The calculations had a zero sum.)

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